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REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

Morals in Evolution: A Study in Comparative Ethics. By L. T.

HOBHOUSE. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1906. 2 Vols.
— pp. xvii, 375 ; vii, 294.

The purpose of these volumes is to trace the evolution of the ethical consciousness as it is displayed in the habits and customs, rules and principles, which have arisen in the course of human history for the regulation of human life. In order to understand this ethical development, we must make a comparative study of the laws and customs of men at different stages of social life, as well as of the ideas and ideals underlying the social or ethical order, the reasons, that is, which men give for making and obeying laws of conduct. There are, in short, two distinct problems before us. One is to describe and classify the leading types and customs to be found in each great department of social life, with a view to ascertaining the direction of ethical progress ; another is to examine the moral sanctions which have been offered for rules of action, in order to discover, if possible, the line of advance from lower to higher conceptions, and to note how far the higher ethical and religious ideas have actually moulded the practice of men. The first problem is solved in Part I, "The Standard," which presents us with a comparative study of institutions ; the second in Part II, "The Basis," which gives a comparative study of religion and the great ethical systems of history.

The work is a study in comparative ethics, the business of such a science being "to determine the generic character and principal specific variations of the conception of the Good as actually held by men in different places at different times" (Vol. I, p. 20), and to inquire whether among these conceptions there is anything which can be called development. In entering upon such an investigation, the student at first experiences a bewildering sense of the diversity of moral judgment, but is finally impressed with a more fundamental and far-reaching uniformity (p. 31). We can hardly deny to any race of men or period of time the possession of the primary characteristics out of which the most advanced moral code is constructed. If there is any ethical progress, it is to be found, not in the development of new instincts or impulses, or in the disappearance of instincts that are old and bad, but rather in the rationalization of the moral code, which, as society advances, becomes more clearly thought out, and more con-

sistently and comprehensively applied. The spiritual consciousness deepens, the ethical order is purged of inconsistencies and extended in scope. Blind adherence to custom is modified by an intelligent perception of the welfare of society, and moral obligation is set upon a rational basis. The psychological equipment of human beings, on the one side, and the actual needs of social life, on the other, are the underlying factors determining rules of conduct from the lowest stage upwards; but it is only at the highest grade of reflection that their operation enters fully into consciousness, so that the mind can understand the grounds and value of the laws which it has itself laid down (pp. 33 ff.).

After discussing the scope and method of comparative ethics (pp. 1-41), and outlining the main types of social organization (pp. 42-78), the author takes up the ethical institutions, *i. e.*, those customs and laws which are most directly related to ethical ideas, in a series of chapters on: "Law and Justice" (pp. 79-133), "Marriage and the Position of Women" (pp. 134-177), "Women in the Civilized World" (pp. 178-239), "The Relations between Communities" (pp. 240-280), "Class Relations" (pp. 281-331), "Property and Poverty" (pp. 332-363). The following conclusions are reached in this part of the work: Primitive society rests on ties spontaneously formed by blood-kinship, by intermarriage, and perhaps by mere neighborhood. On the next stage, the social structure is extended, and in some respects also consolidated, by the rise of military power and the separation of rulers and ruled; the principle of force, underlying government at this stage, is transmuted and partially moralized by ethical and religious influence into a principle of authority, exacting obedience of its subjects as a right, but owing them consideration and paternal government as a duty. Finally, in the higher civilizations, a new principle makes headway, whereby the fabric of society comes to rest upon the good-will of the citizens and the social nature of man, while the claims of government are based upon the necessity of an ordered rule in the interests not only of social coöperation, but of individual freedom (pp. 364, 58, 66 f., 71 ff.). With this development in social organization, the development of law and justice keeps step. At first there is an entire lack of regular methods in enforcing justice. Then the blood-feud arises; rights are maintained and wrongs redressed by the parties interested or their kinfolk. From this stage we ascend by many gradations to the impartial justice of a public tribunal, investigating each case by a rational process, distinguishing crimes from civil wrongs, and limiting the responsibility for the wrong

to the individual perpetrator. The law grows up, as a rule, under the shadow of the principle of authority, and acts in the interests of external order rather than of personal rights; hence it is often administered with insufficient safeguards for the innocent and with cruel severity to the criminal. The next step is to remedy these defects by changes which aim at reforming the criminal and cutting off the sources of crime (pp. 364-365, 83, 84, 89 ff., 119 ff.). The institution of marriage passes through a somewhat analogous evolution. The natural family begins with a relatively loose organization, and passes into a state in which close-knit relations are obtained at the expense of the subjection of the wife. The aim of higher civilizations seems to be to reconcile the intimacy of the union with equal freedom for both parties. In the position of women, apart from the question of marriage, it is the idea of personality that becomes more and more prominent with progress (pp. 365 f., 176 f., 237 f.). As to the external relations of communities, it may be said that the line of advance is from group-morality to intertribal and international morality. In the earlier stages, the individual's obligations are limited to the group, members of other groups being indifferent or hostile. The hostility is directed towards individuals of the opposing community, not merely against the community as a corporate whole. A step onward is taken when warfare loses its personal character, and the result of victory, even if pushed to the point of annexation, is not to cancel the rights of the conquered or to punish them for attachment to their own side. Lastly, in this fuller recognition of a common humanity, we find the beginning of a more far-reaching conception of a law, and therefore, ultimately, of a society of nations, to which each independent state owes obedience (pp. 366, 279). As to internal relations, the primitive group is generally a society of equals. But in the earlier phases of social advance personal rights are apt to suffer deterioration. The growth of a large order and a firm authority is hostile at the outset to the maintenance of individual freedom and social equality. Ethical and religious progress tends to redress the balance, and the claims of personality reassert themselves piece-meal in the higher civilizations (pp. 366, 287, 291, 329 ff.). Turning to the rights of property and contract, we see the simple community of primitive peoples giving way to a system of free contract and individual ownership, from which the hampering restrictions of caste and feudal status gradually fall away. Individual energy and initiative are set free, but individual freedom again raises questions of social control (pp. 366-367, 362 f.).

To characterize the fundamental factors in the entire process of

evolution: A double movement marks the transition from the lower to the higher levels of civilized law and custom. The social order is strengthened and extended. Blood-feud yields to the reign of law; personal chieftainship to a regular government and an organized police. Instead of the small primitive group, we have nation-states, continental empires, great areas enjoying internal peace and owning a common law. On this side the human being becomes more and more subject to social restraints; his rights are perhaps fewer, but those rights are more secure. Order and liberty become for a time opposed; but this opposition is not essential, they draw together again in higher stages. The responsible human being, man or woman, is the center of modern ethics as of modern law, free to make his own life, bound by no restrictions of states nor even of nationality or race, answerable for his acts and those of no other, at liberty to make the best or worst of himself, to accept or decline relations with others. On the other hand, as this free individual breaks the shell of the older groupings, he comes into direct relations with the state as a whole, which succeeds to many of the rights and duties of the older groups. So far as rights and duties are conceived as attaching to human beings as such, they become universalized, and are therefore the care of society as a whole. Lastly, the universalism which the idea of personality holds within it cannot be satisfied with the limits of the nation-state; obligations apply to humanity as a whole. To realize humanity then, in the double sense of the term, is the sum of the whole process of evolution (pp. 367-368).

However, in order to understand ethical development, we must not only know what men are bidden to do by law and custom at each stage, but also the reasons which they themselves assign for doing it (Vol. I, p. 35). This task is attempted in the second volume, which deals with the following subjects: "The Early Phases of Thought" (pp. 1-49), "Ethical Conceptions in Early Thought" (pp. 50-84), "The World and the Spirit" (pp. 85-118), "Monotheism" (pp. 119-159), "Ethical Idealism" (pp. 160-178), "Philosophic Ethics" (pp. 179-206), "Modern Ethics" (pp. 207-257), "The Line of Ethical Development" (pp. 258-284).

Ethical conceptions are bound up with the development of thought in general, of ideas as to the nature and origin of things and the destinies of men. Hence, in order to understand them and their growth, it is necessary to understand the different ways of interpreting the world; and it is for this reason that Mr. Hobhouse traces for us the general evolution of thought, the religious and philosophical concep-

tions of mankind, and shows how this evolution is connected with moral progress. On the lowest stages there is difficulty in forming any conceptions at all, familiar categories are blurred and intermingled, there is an almost bewildering mass of confusions (Vol. II, pp. 20 ff., 264). This confusion is the intellectual basis of animism and magic. The spirit of animism is a rudely formed conception, the function of which is to account for the processes of life and death, growth and decay. On a higher stage the world of ideas begins to be purged of these confusions; persons now are persons, functions functions, relations relations (pp. 264-265). The savage invents beings which are not mere spirits behind the objects that surround him, but genuine mythical creations; they play a part in the theory of the world, explaining the origin of customs, and sometimes accounting for the creation of man and the world itself (pp. 31 ff.). We pass from spirits to gods, from animism to polytheism. In the world of thought dominated by magic, animism or polytheism, we note two fairly distinct stages of ethical development. In the lower, the force behind custom is the fear of magical influences or of revengeful spirits, neither of which is essentially ethical. The magical taboo may be held to embody what we call moral feelings, but it implies no clear recognition of the distinctive nature of morality. A step in advance is taken when spiritual agencies arise which take an interest in certain moral acts as such. In this way certain departments of action are marked out in which a distinctly religious sanction is found for certain rules of conduct, and this idea is generalized in proportion as the avenging deities become the ministers and possibly the attributes of some, or, it may be, of one of the greater gods, who thus comes to be an upholder of the moral order as a whole. Such a god will be a judge of men who rewards and punishes in accordance with an impartial law. Unfortunately, the conception of judgment is too often associated with means of appeasing divine wrath, in which very primitive and non-moral conceptions are wont to survive. Bearing these limitations in mind, we may nevertheless recognize that morality is here based upon a partially moralized religion (pp. 50 ff., 71 ff., 269 f.).

Image-making develops into thinking, picture ideas are transformed into definite or abstract conceptions, and we reach the philosophical or spiritual religions, the eastern representatives of which are the creed of Zoroaster, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Taoism (pp. 85-118). The awakening reason endeavors to render an articulate account of the universe, of the world-process as a whole, of man's place therein and

the duties which it imposes upon him. The conceptual religions rise above mere imagery and handle categories as distinct objects of thought. The spiritual draws itself together and is presented in antithesis to the sensual and earthly, as the source of all light within man and without (pp. 85 ff., 265–266). With the conception of spirituality a distinct set of ethical conceptions is connected. The individual must subdue the senses and all things that make for his own self-assertion and hinder his perfect communion with the spiritual world. Pride must give place to humility, resentment to forgiveness, the narrow love of kinship to universal benevolence, family life to the selfless, impersonal brotherhood of monasticism (pp. 87–88). To cultivate the best within himself and to aid others in the same work are the means of man's salvation. The socially constructive qualities, we see, are distinguished and idealized, but in the very act and fact of being so idealized, their usefulness in organizing society is in a large measure annulled. They are conceived as being best cultivated apart from ordinary human ties, and as the foundation of a monastic brotherhood rather than of a living human society. Self-negation is made more prominent than active kindness and love. Universal benevolence is held incompatible with the passionate love of woman and child. The practice of ideal virtues seems too hard for the householder and the man of affairs. Those very qualities which should refine the world are thought to be soiled by the world. Self-surrender and universal love—the two pillars of higher ethics—are set up, but they are left standing in a void (pp. 117 ff., 271–273).

To the Western world spiritual religion is familiar mainly in the form of monotheism, and this our author takes up next, studying its development in Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Christian theology. In its fuller development it teaches: There is one, personal, infinite, eternal God, the source and sustainer of all that is. God is pure spirit, and the spiritual is the comprehensive expression for the highest and best that is known to man. It is defined negatively by opposition to the earthly, positively by the exaltation of morality into perfect purity of heart. God is spirit and his communion with man must be spiritual; his worship is spiritual, and forms and ceremonies are naught without the inward and spiritual grace given unto us in them. What must win God is the genuine turning of the heart to him, a faith in him, which is also in the highest monotheism a love for him, from whom flows love to man. Though man's corruption separates him from God, yet with a mercy equal to his justice God has provided means for man's forgiveness and salvation (pp. 127 f.). This conception

of God gave rise to theoretical difficulties, to meet which dogmas were developed, and these dogmas had their influence upon ethics. Among the problems examined and discussed in this connection are the problems of evil, free will, determinism, responsibility of God and man, sin and atonement, faith and works (pp. 128-145).

According to Mr. Hobhouse, ethical monotheism has to a certain extent failed in its intention. In applying its principles to life, Christianity has moved between two poles of difficulty. To elaborate a system of rewards and punishments is to run the risk of degrading morals into a form of spiritual calculation; to declare that conduct follows truly and naturally from the convinced faith of a Christian tends to degrade the ethical side of religion to a secondary place. Neither Protestantism nor the Roman Church advanced to the ethical position that it is the good man through his goodness who is nearest to God. They were both too intent on the doctrine of exclusive salvation and could see no good outside their respective bodies. Not being willing to surrender the conception of the Deity as an omnipotent Creator standing outside his world, the theologians have been compelled under whatever disguises to impute to him its evil along with its goodness. To explain the history of Christ, they have maintained, with whatever refinements, the doctrine of transferable merit, and in magnifying faith they have made true loveliness and beauty of character secondary in God's eyes (pp. 146 f.).

As to the moral standard, the author declares, Christianity carries one side of ethics to the highest pitch of perfection, but it leaves another side comparatively neglected. "The conception of the brotherhood of love, based on the negation of self, is demonstrably inadequate to the problem of reorganizing society and intelligently directing human efforts. Even on the personal side it is deficient, for human progress depends on the growth and perfecting of faculty, and therefore requires that provision be made for a self-development which is not selfishness, but builds up a better personality on a basis of self-repression. Equally on the social side the ideal of loving self-surrender is beautiful, but not always right. . . . Nor does true love mean brotherly kindness and a diffused benevolence alone, but legitimately includes the whole gamut of human passions, and a working ethical system must not suppress but supply a place for these" (pp. 155 ff., 272 f.). Fortunately for the Western world supernaturalism was but one side of Christianity. It is in the simple personal following of Christ that the strength of Christianity will always lie, not in the mazes of dogmatic theology, nor in the pomp of ceremonial, nor even in the fervor of the preacher or the enthusiasm of the mystic.

But there are, besides these religious forms, more independent modes of ethical thinking, and we find them first employed between the sixth and fourth centuries B.C., in China by Confucius and Mencius (pp. 161-178), and in Greece by the philosophers. The Chinese thinkers, however, were moral teachers rather than philosophers, and we may therefore say that moral philosophy begins its course with the Greeks. The ethical consciousness begins to examine the conditions which have hitherto determined its growth and inquires into their why and wherefore. What is the Good, the end of human life, the aim which a thinking being should set before himself as the goal of his existence? This is part of a movement which extends far beyond the sphere of ethics, and attacks the very foundations of knowledge and belief. The structural categories underlying all experience have been brought clearly before consciousness and utilized in the construction of a philosophy of things; now they are themselves subjected to criticism. Thought seeks to determine its own value as a measure of reality (pp. 179 ff., 267 ff.). The reconstruction of reality on the basis of a criticism of first principles was first seriously taken in hand by the Greeks. It was found to be no less necessary in the region of conduct than in the field of knowledge. The progress made along these lines in ethics by thinkers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics is outlined by the author from pages 179 to 205.

Two great contributions were made by Greek ethics (pp. 205 ff., 273 ff.). In its earlier stage it founded moral obligation on the well-being of the individual. It taught that virtue was not an emptying but a fulfilment of the personality. It reconciled individual self-development with legal, law-abiding citizenship in a free city-state. In its later stages, when the old civic life was breaking up and the problem taking new shape, it laid the foundation of a universalistic ethics by conceiving a standard of conduct applicable to all mankind. In neither of these directions, however, was the analysis of the Greek thinkers final; it had behind it too little spiritual and social experience (pp. 205 ff., 276). The Greek solution was too simple for the moderns; for them the conflict between law and conscience, public authority and private judgment, was too acute. The Greek antithesis between real and apparent good, the choice respectively of reason and desire, deepens into the opposition of duty and interest. Morality presents itself as a law imposed upon human nature, which compels by authority rather than appeals by inherent attractiveness. Duty and self-sacrifice become central conceptions of ethical theory. But conduct cannot have moral worth unless it is unconstrained. Hence the sanction of this law had

to be found in human nature itself, even in a sense within the nature of each individual (pp. 207 ff.). Moreover, the requirements of the self are heightened and deepened as the antithesis between spiritual life and the bodily is more keenly felt. The notion of the social order, too, is fundamentally changed by the decay of the city-state and the rise of world empires and world religions. Modern thought seeks to analyze personality, reduces happiness to terms of conscious experience, takes to pieces the idea of the natural, and seeks to reconstruct it in terms of the elements of order or connectedness of experience. It likewise reduces the social conceptions to their ultimate elements, and attempts to reconstruct the social order on the basis of such an analysis (pp. 249 ff.).

Mr. Hobhouse shows how the modern systems attempt to solve these problems (pp. 211-215), and outlines the solution to which the course of thought seems to point: Thought is rational in so far as it is a system of coherent and consilient judgments, and this internal cohesion is itself the ground and meaning of its validity. For conduct there is a rational and objectively valid order in so far as there is a similarly coherent scheme of moral judgments. The postulate of rational ethics, then, is that such a coherent body of ethical judgments is to be found. The idea underlying all ethical thought, and giving coherence to it, may be expressed in the form of the doctrine that each man is a member of a spiritual whole to which he owes service. If obligation is rationally justified, man is bound by spiritual ties to a community with a life and purpose of its own. But the tie is not such as to destroy his separate personality, but rather such that, like love, it maintains the distinctness of the persons whom it binds together, and hence, though the whole to which he belongs may be called a spiritual whole, it is only by metaphor a self or person. More strictly, it should be a spiritual whole, in the true conception of which personality is a subordinate element. Here the term 'super-personal', employed by some idealists, points in the right direction (pp. 215-223).

If this conclusion is correct, the problem of finding the principles of a rational moral order consists in formulating the nature and supreme purposes of the whole to which man belongs. Neither the theory of 'natural law' and natural rights (pp. 223-230) nor Utilitarianism (pp. 230-233) has succeeded in solving the problem. The solution is to be sought along the lines marked out by Comte and Hegel; the conception of a self-directing humanity lies at the basis of a scientific ethics. In modern thought the principle of human development, under whatever name, becomes in a sense the

pivot upon which ethical conceptions turn. The effect of this principle once recognized is a Copernican change of attitude. Hitherto human conduct has been conceived as bound by law, first divine law, then natural law. But if the humanitarian principle is correct, man is not made for the law, but the law for humanity. Instead of religion being the basis for ethics, ethics becomes the test to which religion must submit. As with religions, so with social institutions. These institutions have grown up in rough accordance with the circumstances of social life, but they have no value or validity except in so far as they subserve human needs. But they are not to be set aside when they happen to be inconvenient, as the doctrine of expediency suggests, not only because in the long run nothing is so inexpedient as the practice of unsettling society, but also because the rights and duties recognized by the ordinary consciousness, when viewed genetically, are seen to have arisen in response to social needs, and to contain elements, however roughly put, of ethical truth. Humanitarianism has touched every department of practical morals,—class and social divisions, the position of women, the law of marriage, the criminal law, the law of war, the rights and duties of states, the claims of nationality, the right of property, the law of contract, the rights of association and of citizenship, the equality of religions. It has justified the Christian ethics on its positive side. Finally, nothing is more certain, if the rationalist doctrine is true, than that the doctrine itself will grow, and, as growth implies, will change; and because such changes are to be expected, any attempt to define their outcome must be valueless (pp. 233–257, 274 ff.).

The further development of society will follow a very different course from its past history; it is destined to fall within the scope of an organizing intelligence and to be removed from the play of blind force to the sphere of rational order. We do not know what new shapes the evolution will take, but it is something to learn that the slowly wrought-out dominance of mind is the central fact of evolution. “If this is true, it is the germ of a religion and an ethics which are as far removed from materialism as from the optimistic teleology of the metaphysician or the half naïve creeds of the churches. It gives a meaning to human effort as neither the pawn of an overruling Providence nor the sport of blind force. It is a message of hope to the world, of suffering lessened and strife assuaged, not by fleeing from reason to the bosom of faith, but by the increasing rational control of things by that collective wisdom, the εἰς ξυνοῶς λόγος which is all that men directly know of the divine” (pp. 278–284).

Mr. Hobhouse has produced a very able work, one of the best of its kind that has appeared in many years. It is a careful, interesting, and instructive presentation of the subject, giving evidence of wide reading and characterized by intelligent judgment. It not only gives us facts, but attempts to see a meaning in them; it not only theorizes about the course of ethical progress, but bases its conclusions upon human experiences. Some of the writers on comparative ethics, warned to beware of metaphysics, have failed to see the forest for the trees; and many of them have lacked the philosophical training necessary to make anything out of the vast material at hand. Mr. Hobhouse has presented us with a study of the history of morals that is not a mere collection of customs and beliefs, but a philosophical interpretation of the ethical experience of mankind.

To be sure, in a discussion covering so broad and rich a field, there will be many points here and there to which the student may take exception. The task of synthesis in a case like this is no easy one, and the ways of interpreting life are many. Where so much is hypothetical, where even the facts themselves which form the ground-work for theory are often in doubt, when the mind attempts to make for itself a picture of the beginnings of things, which are always shrouded in darkness, there is bound to be diversity of opinion. Still it seems to me that the author's general conception of moral progress is correct, and that it moves in the direction of a growing self-consciousness of the human spirit; that an increasing purpose runs through the ages. Two points, however, call for remark. It is not always quite clear how the spirit of humanity is to be conceived, whether as a metaphysical entity like Hegel's 'Reason' or Wundt's 'Universal Will,' or, more concretely, as the mind of individual human beings. It is "not indeed a Being outside and over above men and women, but a Being that is the best of them" (Vol. II, p. 238). The spiritual whole is "only by metaphor a self or person" (p. 223). At the same time, "humanity is not merely a community existing as part of a Kosmos. It is something — a spirit or an organism according to whatever inadequate metaphor we choose for its designation — which has come into being," etc. (p. 251). In all probability "conscious life depends, not on a process in any one cell in the brain, but in multitudinous processes carried on simultaneously in cells that lie far apart in the cerebral mass. Yet consciousness is one. So the Mind of Humanity is the unity in process of formation of multitudinous minds of men. To call it 'mind' may be metaphorical and inadequate. But to call it a real agency is, I think, literal prose" (see note 2, p. 238). The term

'super-personal,' employed by some idealists for the spiritual whole, points in the right direction (note 1, p. 223). Perhaps the confusion is of my own making, perhaps I am too much influenced by the note on page 238, but Mr. Hobhouse leaves me in doubt as to his meaning here. Perhaps he is not so "far removed from the optimistic teleology of the metaphysician" as he thinks. But if it is the spirit of humanity, in this sense, that is shaping our ends and making for righteousness in the world, how shall we explain to ourselves the relation existing between the different personalities and this spirit, and how get rid of the problems which confronted the spiritual religions?

Mr. Hobhouse also seems to me to lay too much emphasis on the rationalistic element. "The ethical order being thus interpreted," he states, "the claims of duty are urged on the ground that when we thoroughly understand its nature and all its bearings on our life and that of humanity, we are compelled as rational beings to recognize its validity, and admit that the ends to which it points are wider and greater than any private good of our own that may conflict with it. Thus for rationalism the moral basis lies in the unfolding of the full meaning of the moral order, as that through which the human spirit grows" (p. 274). It is not merely as 'rational' beings that we do this, unless we include in the term 'rational' the emotional and conative sides of our nature. Reason demands that we recognize the validity of the claims of duty, provided that we accept the ends to which the ethical order points, provided that we *believe* in them, that we will them, that they are 'goods' for us. And this is after all what Mr. Hobhouse himself means when he says: "Obligation, then, rests on the altruism of which the love-relation is the perfect type, which presents itself as duty when our natures are imperfectly formed by it, and is justified by reason because its aims alone give harmonious and coherent meaning to our practical efforts and our conception of the good. To conform to it, is to rise above considerations of personal happiness and to come into relation to the whole" (p. 222).

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An Outline of the Idealistic Construction of Experience. By J. B. BAILLIE. London, Macmillan & Co.; New York, The Macmillan Co., 1906. — pp. xx, 344.

The plan and scope of the present volume are partly explained by the fact that it consists of the substance of the Shaw Fellowship Lectures, delivered at Edinburgh University during the winter session of